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German Spy Comes In From the Cold

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EAST BERLIN, March 12 — A one-time Nazi SS officer who for a decade was the Soviet Union's most highly placed agent in West German intelligence re-emerged today in a luxury hotel here to present his memoirs.

The appearance of the donnish-looking, ostensibly erstwhile K.G.B. agent, Heinz Felfe — he said he collects his pension from Moscow — was a minor sensation in East Berlin and a bit of a mystery. Communist spies do not usually publish their memoirs simply because they grow old and nostalgic.

Mr. Felfe, who is about to celebrate his 68th birthday, has titled his 384-page autobiography "In Service of the Adversary." But although he presented the book on the Communist side of the Berlin wall, it is being published in Hamburg, on the capitalist side, and its target audience is West Germany.

Hans-Helmut Röhring, the West German publisher, speculated that the book might never appear in East Germany and explained why. "He was a Nazi," the publisher said of his author, whispering the word "Nazi" with a hiss. "And he wasn't just 15 years old. He was a grown man."

He Was 'Naive,' He Writes

In his autobiography, Mr. Felfe writes nimbly around his membership in Heinrich Himmler's terror and counterintelligence organization, which played a central role in the mass killings of European Jews and in the liquidation of the Nazis' foes.

As a lieutenant in the organization.

Mr. Felfe writes, he was "naive" about the extermination of the Jews, and when he learned about it he turned to the Soviet Union so that such a thing would never happen again.

It was only in 1944, he told journalists today, that he first heard hints of the Final Solution, and, although he had served on the rail line not far from Auschwitz, did not know it was a death camp.

Mr. Felfe was recruited in 1951 into the Gehlen Organization, the forerunner of the West German Federal Intelligence Service. But two years earlier he had agreed to work for the K.G.B. largely because, if his account is to be believed, he was so shocked by the Allied firebombing of his native Dresden that he was determined to serve the cause of world peace.

As espionage nonfiction, Mr. Felfe's book is disappointingly modest about his exploits. He does not really explain how, heading the Federal Intelligence Service's Soviet section, he was unearthed as a "mole" in 1961, but he vividly likens his eight years' captivity in West Germany to "the times when there were slaves" — not apparently an allusion to the Third Reich.

'Friends in the K.G.B.'

Yet some of his revelations appear intended to stir unease in West Germany. He writes that the Federal Intelligence Service spied extensively on West German politicians — a list of 54 names is supplied — and delivered its secrets to its "big brother," the American Central Intelligence Agency.

Today, he asserted that it was in-

conceivable to him that the K.G.B. had a similar hold over the East German Ministry for State Security.

Mr. Felfe, who was freed in a prisoner exchange in 1969, asserted that his book was not part of a Soviet disinformation campaign aimed at West Germany. He acknowledged that his "friends in the K.G.B." had allowed him to spend months leafing through their archives in Moscow.

Although Mr. Felfe has been living in East Berlin since 1969 and is said to have taught criminology at Humboldt University here, his news conference was not held at the state-run press center here, and no East German journalist stood to ask him a question. He was ignored on East Germany's evening television news.

As journalists lined up to get their copies of his autobiography signed, Mr. Felfe was asked by an American correspondent whether he missed anything from his years in West Germany. "No, I have everything I want," he said. "I have my Mercedes, I have my video recorder and a house in the country."

Had he been married? Yes, said the K.G.B. man, but he had never told his West German wife of his double life and had left her and two children behind. He had remarried an East German doctor and was happy.

Did he miss his children? "Ah, now you are asking things I don't want to talk about," Mr. Felfe said, pausing before signing a copy of "In Service of the Adversary." He signed it and observed sotto voce, "The life of an agent is a lonely one."